



# News Release

## IDAHO DEPARTMENT OF WATER RESOURCES

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### **IDWR's Stream Channel Protection Program Fully Restored**

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The Idaho Department of Water Resources has restored three positions to the Department's Stream Channel Protection program cut three and a half years ago as a result of budget holdbacks ordered in 2002.

The three new stream channel protection specialists are:

- Greg Taylor – Northern Region in Coeur d'Alene
- Chris Welcker – Western Region in Boise
- Tom Bassista – Eastern Region in Idaho Falls

The Governor and the Legislature recently restored funding to the program, which incurred a backlog of nearly a thousand stream channel alteration applications since 2002 because only two people were left to cover the entire state.

"We're back in business," Program Coordinator Erv Ballou said. "When the funding was cut, many people thought our stream protection laws were gone too. Now that we are back up to staff, we want to remind people that before they do anything to alter a stream in any way, they must first contact us and file an application."

During the time the program was reduced, Ballou saw an increase in the number of violations throughout the state.

Anyone interested in obtaining a stream channel alteration permit should contact the IDWR office in their respective region and ask to speak to the stream channel protection specialist.

**Note:** Terry Blau is the stream channel protection specialist for Southern Region in Twin Falls.

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